

THE
HISTOYR
OF THE
Seven Champions
OF
CHRISTENDOM.

PART the FIRST



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The First part of the History of the
Seven Champions



C H A P. I.

The Birth, Parentage, and glorious
 ploits of St. George for England.

SOON after the ruin of Troy sprang
 up the Seven Champions of Christen-
 dom; and since we may, without parti-
 ality, reckon St. George the worthiest, we
 will treat of him first.

He was descended from Æneas, who
 after the ruin of old Troy wandered into
 Italy, and there ended his days, leaving
 his son Ascaninus, in his place. Ascanius
 dying, left Sylvias, who died and left
 Brutus, who first occupied Britain; be-
 ing inhabited by Giants and wild Men,
 without government. These Brutus, by
 his policy overcame, and soon after he

divided them into counties, and so built Troy Nova, now called London; and often that Coventry, where our famous St. George was born; whose mother, whilst with child of him, dreamed she conceived a Dragon, that would be the cause of her death; being troubled at her dream, she told it to her husband, who taking only one Knight with him, went to the walls of Kalyb, to consult the enchantress about it, when at her gate they found a brazen horn, which they sounded: no sooner had they done, but they heard a terrible voice make this answer: That the lady should die in child bed of a son, who should be a famous champion, and kill a Dragon. Brutus, amazed at these words, departed home, and found the lady delivered, but dead, and the child stole by the enchantress Kalyb; which grieved him so, that he wandered into a strange land, and there died.

The enchantress brought up St. George in her cave fourteen years, letting him want for nothing, giving him liberty to walk the woods, attended by ten frightful sayters, fearing he would make his escape for the enchantress so much doated upon him, that at last she lusted for him; but he utterly refused her, by reason of her

witchcraft: Nevertheless, hoping to get his liberty, he seemed the more willing, by which means he so gained her favour, that she resigned all her power to him, and told him his birth and parentage. So taking him by the hand, she led him to a brazen castle, where the other six Champions were.—Then she led him into a stable, where were six horses, belonging to the six Knights; after which she led him into a room, where was the richest armour in the world; so chusing the best helmet and breast-plate she put them



on with her own hand, and gave him a falcheon in his: Now, said she, thou art invincible. Thus being blinded with lust, she put her silver wand into his hand, which caused her destruction; for as they walked by a rock, she struck it with a wand, and it opened, where he saw a number of in-

fants she had killed by her enchantments. Follow me, said she, and I will shew thee more; so stepping in, he, with his wand, struck the rock, and it closed up. — Thus ended the enchantress, whom we will leave to the fury of the devils, and give an account of St. George's glorious actions.

CHAP. II.

St. George kills a Dragon, and redeems
Sabra from Death.

AS soon as St. George had released the six champions out of the enchanted castle, he took his leave, and they travelled several ways in search of adventures; when St. George went into Egypt, where meeting a poor hermit, asked of him where he might get a lodging. The hermit told him he could find no entertainment, for a poisonous dragon each day devoured a virgin, and had destroyed all except the King's daughter; and the king had pro-

mised his daughter in marriage to any Knight that killed the Dragon, and the crown after his death. St. George hearing this, desired to lie in his cave that night, and next morning he would fight the Dragon. The old man gladly received him; the next morning he mounted his steed, and rode to meet the Dragon; but on his way he met the princess all in tears. He gave them comfort



by telling them that he would kill the Dragon or lose his life. The Princess admired his courage, gave him thanks, and told him, If he succeeded he should be well rewarded. St. George kissed her hand, and desiring her to go back till she heard farther; and so on he marched to the encounter. No sooner had he entered the

valley, but the dragon espied him, and made a terrible noise. Then St. George rode up bravely to him, and striking his spear against his scales, shivered it into pieces. Then the Dragon with his tail struck him off his horse; so that he was forced to draw his sword, and fight on foot; at last, when he was almost suffocated with the stench of the Dragon's breath, he espied a naked place under his left wing, where he thrust his sword into his heart, and killed him. — When done, he gave God thanks; then he cut off the head of the Dragon, and put it on his spear, in order



to carry it to the King and claim the Princess; but on his way he was beset by many armed men belonging to Aminder, King

of Morocco on purpose to destroy him, for fear he should wed Sabra the King's daughter, whom Aminder had a love for: But as treachery seldom prevails, so our hero St. George beat them all before Aminder's face; and then hastened to the King of Egypt to tell him the Dragon was slain. The king overjoyed, ordered the bells to ring, and bonfires to be made, and that St. George should be entertained according to his merit. He was welcomed by the King himself, as soon as he came into court, especially by the fair princess, who from that time loved him entirely, and presented him with a ring of gold off her own finger: But the king of Morocco envying St. George, strove to poison him with a cup of wine; as soon as he touched it, the diamond in his ring turned pale, and his nose bled; wherefore he refused it, and the princess cried out, Treason! but the King her father was so prejudiced in Aminder's favour, that he would not believe it. This so emboldened Aminder, that he accused St. George of being a Christian, and of striving to convert the Princess. This so enraged her father, that he swore St. George's death, but not daring to attempt his life openly, he sent him with a letter to the

Sultan of Persia, desiring the Sultan to destroy him. So St. George went to the Sultan, in order to deliver this letter; but on his way seeing one of their temples, and being enraged at their idolatry, he broke their images, which occasioned the people to seek his life; but in one day he slew near five hundred of them. This made a great noise all over the country; so that they arose in great numbers, and at last took him, and brought him before the Sultan, and told what he had done. At this the Sultan swore he should suffer the most cruel death; but our champion told him he had done as God had directed him, and delivered him the letter from Ptolomy King of Egypt; as soon as he had read it, he ordered his guards to cast him into a deep dungeon, till the day of execution; where he had not been long, before they put down two hungry lions to devour him; but he soon broke his bands, and found an old rusty sword, with which he killed them both. The Sultan hearing this, ordered him to be faster bound. Here he lived seven years upon rats and mice. In the mean time Ptolomy forced his daughter to marry the King of Morocco; but she hating him,

she went to a Necromancer, to know how she might preserve her virginity from him, who advised her to steep a chain of gold seven days in dragon's milk and tyger's blood, and then wear it about her neck; and no man should have any power over her; so by this means she preserved her virginity for St. George; who at present we shall leave in a dark dungeon and give some account of the other Champions.



CHAP. III.

St. Denis of France lives seven years in the shape of an Hart.



FAIR Eugenia for her pride was transformed into a Mulberry Tree; and it being St. Dennis's fortune to travel by that tree, he was transformed into an Hart; after which, seeing himself in a spring near to this tree, he began to lament his condition in the following manner.

I was a Man that fame did gain,
But now a Hart in shew;
When I shall be a man again,
Alas! I do not know.

When a voice from the tree made the following reply.

Be easy Knight, thy case is mine,
 But seven years hence we shall shine;
 For by the eating of a Rose,
 Thou shalt finish both our woes.

At seven years end his horse brought
 two roses in his teeth, of which he eat,
 and became a man; so fetching his sword
 he cut down the mulberry-tree, and there
 appeared the King's daughter; whereupon
 they went to her father's palace, and were
 received with great joy.

CHAP. IV.

St. James of Spain kills a Fire-Drake and
 a Boar; and of his stealing a King's
 Daughter.

ST. JAMES, in his road to Jerusalem
 met with a fire-drake, which held him
 battle seven days; but at last he overcame
 him, and then proceeded to Cappadocia,
 and from thence to Jerusalem. At his
 arrival he heard the noise of trumpets,
 which were for the entertainment of the
 King and his Knights, who were that day

gone to hunt the wild boar. The King, as usual, promised a reward to him who should kill the boar. Away went St. James, who before the King got to the forest he killed the biggest ever seen. As soon as the king saw it, he gave him the reward, and asked what country and religion he was of? St. James told him he was a Spaniard and a Christian.

This so enraged the King, that he told him



he must die according to the law of the land; but because he killed the boar, he should chuse his death. He desired to be shot by maidens: but as soon as they saw St. James, they were so pleased with his looks, they refused it. Then the King commanded they should cast lots who should kill him, and it fell to the King's own daughter; but she falling on her knees, begged his

life, which was granted, on condition he immediately quitted the land, but before he went he stole King's daughter, and carried her with him to Spain.

CHAP. V.

St. Andrew slays a Giant, and travels among Spirits. St. Patrick released six Ladies. St. David slays Prince Palatine, and sleeps seven Years in an enchanted Garden.

ST. Anthony, after passing thro' many dangerous places came at last to a great castle, where was a Giant none dare fight, having six of the King of Thrace's daughters with him; five of them transformed to swans, to save their virginity. This Giant St. Anthony slew, and left the castle to them.

The famous St. Andrew of Scotland, af-

ter he had travelled through a vale full of
 sad fiends for seven days without any light,
 at last came to the castle where lay the
 Giant St. Andrew slew. Entering the castle,
 he found the Thracian King and his Knights,
 bewailing the loss of his daughters. St.
 Patrick asked the ladies who they were.
 They answered, they were daughters to
 the King of Thrace, who had been trans-
 formed to swans, to preserve them from
 a Giant's lust; but at last St. Anthony
 slew the Giant, and St. Andrew by his
 prayers, restored them to their former shape,
 which was more than their father and all
 his Knights could do by their prayers to
 their idols; and at the sight of this miracle,
 their father and his followers embraced
 Christianity. Afterwards they all wandered
 to seek St. Andrew, whom we will leave
 now to say something of St. David of Wales.

St. David behaved himself so bravely,
 at the court of the Count Palatina, that
 the count made him his companion.—On
 a festival, there being tilts and tourna-
 ments, St. David being champion, entered
 the first; and the Count's son, ambitious of
 honour, went to answer him, and at first
 was like to worse St. David; but the next
 encounter St. David felled both man and

horse to the ground, and killed them both. This so enraged the Count that he contrived to destroy him, but he could not effect it. Then he sent him to bring an enchanter's head called Ormondin, and St. David went to a rock where he found a sword fast; this he strove to move, but not being able, he fell down, and slept for seven years, till St George came to release him.



CHAP. VI.

St. George gets out of Prison, and releases
St. David.



BR A V E St. George being almost starved in the dungeon, got loose by a bar of iron, with which he made his way out, slew the king's grooms, and took his best horse and armour, and rode to the city gates, where calling aloud to the porter, he told him St. George had broke loose, and he must follow him. The porter opening the gates, he rode away, all the town pursuing him, but could not overtake him—On his journey he was at

a very great strait for viſuals, aed ſeeing a lady at the gate, he aſked her for ſome relief, but ſhe bid him be gone, for if ner huſband, who was Giant, ſhould ſee him, he would kill him. But St. George answered he would rather die in fight than with hunger. The Giant hearing this, came out, ſo they fell to battle ſome hours; but the weather being hot, and the giant fat, he ſweated ſo that it blinded him, and in the



end ſlew him; he then entered the caſtle. and reſreſhed his horſe and himſelf. After this he wandered to the enchanted garden, where St. David was ſleeping, and ſeeing a ſword in a rock he gave it a pull, and it came out. Immediately the enchantment was broke, and he awaked, and gave him thanks; after which they took leave of each other.

CHAP. VII.

St. George steals Sabra the King of Egypt's daughter.



ST. George in his travels to Barbary met a hermit, who shewed him the palace of the court, saying that the King of Morocco was a hunting; he knowing that was the time, changed cloaths with the hermit, and went to the court, where he soon saw his wish'd-for charmer, coming to give alms to the poor.—At last, coming to St. George, he gave her the ring she had given him: she immediately knew it, and taking him by the hand, she

led him into the hall, and there they both wept for joy. She told him now was the time; so giving him armour and a horse, she got up behind him, and away they rode till they were almost starved. At last, seeing a deer; he jumped off, and left Sabra with a servant, and went and slew the deer; but at his return found the servant killed by two lions, and his lady safe,



by which he knew her to be a virgin; but he killed the lions, and afterwards dressed the venison. Then pursuing his journey, he entered the territories of Greece, where at Tilts and Tournaments made for the King's wedding, he met the other six Champions, who behaved so bravely, and overcame all the Knights there, insomuch that Pagan princes all proclaimed war against Christendom, and threatened revenge a-

gainst the Seven Champions for the injuries they had done them in stealing so many Kings' daughters. The champions hearing this, departed each to his own country, to raise forces to oppose the Heathenish Princes; where they were entertained with great joy;

CH A P. VIII.

The champions overcome the Pagans. The sad News St. George received from Sabra, and Manner of his delivering her; with her Story.

AFTER the Seven Champions were departed to their respective dominions, the Pagans were not slow in raising forces to go against the Christians, and went to Hungary; which was the appointed place for both parties to meet.

No sooner were they met, but they fell to, and both parties fought outrageously; but in the end the Pagans were subdued

and Aminder (who had contrived to take St. George's life) was taken prisoner, with many others.

Whilst the Champions and the rest of the Europeans were rejoicing, a Knight came, and desired to speak in private with St. George; and being known by his speech to be of England, St. George very readily consented. As soon as they were retired the Knight told him, that the fair Sabra, who he had left at Coventry, was condemned to die.—How! says St. George, who could be guilty of accusing her, whose soul is whiter than snow.

Here he acquainted the other six Champions of the sad news he had got brought him; and then appointed David the Commander in General in his absence, he departed.

After long and tedious travelling he arrived in England, and it happened to be the day on which Sabra was to be executed, and no Champion had as yet appeared for her. However, just as she approached the pile St. George came, and demanded entrance in defence of the Lady. Upon this the trumpet sounded the charge, and immediately the two noble Champions rushed together, with great fury, and in the end St. George was conqueror, and thereupon went and demanded the Lady, which was

readily granted, and as soon as she was released she knew St. George, and was overjoyed to see him. As soon as they had re-



covered themselves from their past fatigues, St. George desired the reason of her confinement, the which she told them in these terms.

“ Some months after your departure the lustful Earl of Coventry happened to see me, and was enflamed with a desire of enjoying me, and therefore he found means to meet me in a grove, and told me, if I did not comply, he would force me; I therefore desired an hour to consider of it; this he consented to, but would not let me go from him, so sat down and fell asleep, when drawing out a dagger, I gave

him a fatal blow which was the only way to preserve my chastity) and for which I was like to die.

When Sabra came to the end of her story, St. George embraced her tenderly, thanking her for the constant love which she bore him; and then sent directions to the other Champions in what manner they should make an end to the war, which they did, and then came to England, where the nuptials between St. George and Sabra



10 JU 52

were solemnized with the utmost magnificence.

End of the FIRST PART.

